**Test 4\_11**

**Reading Passage 1**

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| In or Out? |

British further education colleges did not traditionally have any concerns about student drop-out, because the origins of the sector were in vocational apprenticeship training for employers where the apprentice could not drop out without endangering their job.  In the 70s, this sector began to expand into more general education courses, which were seen both as an alternative to school for 16-18 year-olds and a second chance for adults.  The philosophy was mainly liberal with students regarded as adults who should not be heavily monitored, but rather free to make their own decisions; it was not uncommon to hear academic staff argue that attendance at classes was purely voluntary.

In the 80s, with an increased consciousness of equal opportunities, the focus of the further education college moved to widening participation, encouraging into colleges students from previously under-represented groups, particularly from ethnic minorities.  This, in turn, led to a curriculum which was more representative of the new student body.  For example, there were initiatives to ensure the incorporation of literature by black writers into A-level literature courses; history syllabuses were altered to move beyond a purely Eurocentric view of the world; and geography syllabuses began to look at the politics of maps.

A turning point came in 1991 with the publication of a report on completion rates by the government inspection body for education, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for England and Wales, (HMI 1991).  However, this report was based on academic staff’s explanations of why students had left.  It suggested that the vast majority left either for personal reasons or because they had found employment and that only 10% left for reasons that could in any way be attributed to the college.

Meanwhile, Britain had been going through the Thatcherite revolution and, in parallel to the Reagan politics of the US, a key principle was the need to focus on radical taxation reduction.  At this point (and to a large extent still), further and higher education colleges were almost entirely funded from the public purse.  There had been many cuts in this funding through the 80s, but no one had really looked at value for money.  However in the early 90s, the Audit Commission with Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED) (the new version of HMI) turned the spotlight onto further education and published a seminal report, Unfinished Business (Audit Commission and OFSTED 1993), which showed that drop-out was happening on a significant scale and, crucially given the politics of the time, attributed a cost to the state of £500 million, arguing that this was a waste of public (i.e. taxpayers’) money.  To quote Yorke (1999), non-completion became political.  The Audit Commission report coincided with government moves to privatise the functions of the state as much as possible; and with the decision to remove further education from the control of local government and give it a quasi-dependent status, where colleges were governed by independent boards of governors bidding to the state for funding to run educational provision.  As part of this, a new series of principles for funding and bidding were developed (FEFC 1994) which incorporated severe financial penalties for student drop-out. In essence, the system is that almost all the state funding is attached to the individual student.  There is funding for initial advice and guidance, on-course delivery and student achievement, but if the student drops out, the college loses that funding immediately, so that loss of students in the first term leads to an immediate loss of college funding for the other two terms.  Not surprisingly, this focused the concern of colleges immediately and sharply on the need to improve student retention rates.

Recently, therefore, there has been considerable effort to improve retention but, as Martinez (1995) pointed out, there was no body of research on which to base strategies.  An additional complexity was that colleges had been slow to computerise their student data and most colleges were in the position of not knowing what their retention rates were or any patterns involved. Where data did exist it was held separately by either administrative or academic staff with poor communication between these groups.  Colleges, however, jumped into a number of strategies based largely on experience, instinct and common sense and publication of these began (Martinez 1996; Martinez 1997; Kenwright 1996; Kenwright 1997).

The main strategies tried are outlined in the literature as summarised by Martinez (1996). These include sorting activities around entry to ensure ‘best fit’, supporting activities including child care, financial support and enrichment/learner support, connecting activities to strengthen the relationship between the college and the student, including mentoring and tutorials and activities to transform the student, including raising of expectations and study/career development support and tutoring.

**Questions** **1-3**

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-14** which are based on passage 1

Look at the following dates (Questions 1-3) and key events in the development of further education below. Match each date with a key event.

Write the correct letter **A-G** in boxes 1-3 on your answer sheet.

**1** 1991

**2** 1993

**3** 1994

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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| **Key Event** |
| **A** | Severe penalties for drop-out are developed as part of college funding mechanisms. |
| **B** | Serious attempts are made to improve student support. |
| **C** | An influential report showing that non-completion rates are significantly high is published. |
| **D** | The lack of a strategical basis is officially recognised. |
| **E** | The HMI is created. |
| **F** | Data on student completion rates for further education are published. |
| **G** | A minor report showing that non-completion rates are significantly high is published. |

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**Questions 4 — 8**

Complete the sentences below with words taken from Reading Passage 1.

Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 4-8 on your answer sheet.

**4** Further education colleges in Britain were originally not worried about student drop-out, because students did not leave college for fear of.......................

**5** According to the writer, the philosophy at further education colleges was...........

**6** As people became more aware of equal opportunities, colleges encouraged students from under-represented groups, as a move to....................... .

**7** The HMI’s report focused on completion rates, based on.......................of reasons for students’ departure from college.

**8** In the early 1990s, the political situation, both in Britain and the US, demanded a major......

**Questions 9 – 14**

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C** or **D**.

Write your answers in boxes 9-14 on your answer sheet.

**9** The report Unfinished Business………………

**A** pointed out the politics of the time.

**B** gave £500 million to the state.

**C**  linked drop-out to wasting money.

**D** turned the spotlight.

**10** The new series of principles developed in 1994 by the FEFC………………..

**A** gave money to each student.

**B** was quasi-independent.

**C** meant colleges had to turn their immediate attention to improving student retention rates.

**D**  was aimed at improving teacher retention rates.

**11** Attempts to reduce the student drop-out rate were hindered, because………………..

**A** there was a lack of research data upon which to base strategies.

**B** colleges did not know what to do.

**C** computers in colleges were slow.

**D** colleges had no patterns.

**12** Further hindrances in reducing the student drop-out rate were………….

**A** colleges’ slowness in computerising data and not knowing their retention rates, nor what patterns of retention existed.

**B** college inertia and administrative incompetence.

**C** computer glitches and strikes, which occurred at most colleges.

**D** colleges not knowing their retention rates or where the patterns were.

**13** Colleges’ strategies to deal with the problem of low retention………………..

**A** brought administrative and academic staff together.

**B** varied enormously.

**C** jumped.

**D** were based on something other than data.

**14** The main strategies to improve retention included…………………

**A** ‘best fit’ supporting activities.

**B** activities to support and transform the student.

**C** the raising of college expectations.

**D** a summary by Martinez.

**Reading Passage 2**

**Tyes and Greens**

There are a number of settlements in this part of East Anglia with names containing the word ‘tye’.  The word is Anglo-Saxon in origin, and the Oxford English Dictionary quotes the earliest usage of the term as dating from 832.  Essentially a ‘tye’ was a green, or a small area of open common land, usually sited away from the main village or settlement, perhaps at the junction of two or more routes.  Local people and passing travellers had the right to pasture their horses, pigs and other farm animals on the tye.

In the Pebmarsh area there seem to have been five or six of these tyes, all, except one, at the margins of the parish.  These marginal clearings are all away from the richer farming land close to the river, and, in the case of Cooks Green, Hayles Tye, and Dorking Tye, close to the edge of still existing fragments of ancient woodland.  It seems likely then that, here, as elsewhere in East Anglia, medieval freemen were allowed to clear a small part of the forest and create a smallholding.  Such unproductive forest land would, in any case, have been unattractive to the wealthy baronial or monastic landowners.  Most of the land around Pebmarsh village belonged to Earls Colne Priory, a wealthy monastery about 10 kilometres to the south, and it may be that by the 13th  and 14th  centuries the tyes were maintained by tenant farmers paying rent to the Priory.

Hayles Tye seems to have got its name from a certain John Hayle who is documented in the 1380s, although there are records pointing to occupation of the site at a much earlier date. The name was still in use in 1500, and crops up again throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, usually in relation to the payment of taxes or tithes.  At some point during the 18th century the name is changed to File’s Green, though no trace of an owner called File has been found.  Also in the 18th  century the original dwellings on the site disappeared.  Much of this region was economically depressed during this period and the land and its dwellings may simply have been abandoned. Several farms were abandoned in the neighbouring village of Alphamstone, and the population dwindled so much that there was no money to support the fabric of the village church, which became very dilapidated.  However, another possibility is that the buildings at File’s Green burnt down, fires being not infrequent at this time.

By 1817 the land was owned by Charles Townsend of Ferriers Farm, and in 1821 he built two brick cottages on the site, each cottage occupied by two families of agricultural labourers.  The structure of these cottages was very simple, just a two-storey rectangle divided in the centre by a large common chimney piece.  Each dwelling had its own fireplace, but the two families seem to have shared a brick bread-oven which jutted out from the rear of the cottage.  The outer wall of the bread-oven is still visible on the remaining cottage. The fireplaces themselves and the chimney structure appear to be older than the 1821 cottages and may have survived from the earlier dwellings.  All traces of the common land had long disappeared, and the two cottages stood on a small plot of less than an acre where the labourers would have been able to grow a few vegetables and keep a few chickens or a pig.  The bulk of their time was spent working at Ferriers farm.

Both cottages are clearly marked on maps of 1874, but by the end of the century one of them had gone.  Again, the last years of the 19th century were a period of agricultural depression, and a number of smaller farms in the area were abandoned.  Traces of one, Mosse’s Farm, still partly encircled by a very overgrown moat, may be seen less than a kilometre from File’s Green.  It seems likely that, as the need for agricultural labour declined, one of the cottages fell into disuse, decayed and was eventually pulled down.  Occasional fragments of rubble and brick still surface in the garden of the remaining cottage.

In 1933, this cottage was sold to the manager of the newly-opened gravel works to the north-west of Pebmarsh village.  He converted these two dwellings into one.  This, then, is the only remaining habitation on the site, and is called File’s Green Cottage.

**Questions** **15 - 18**

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 15-28** which are based on Reading Passage 2.

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C** or **D**.

Write your answers in boxes 15-18 on your answer sheet.

**15** A tye was…………………….

**A** a green.

**B** a large open area.

**C** common land with trees.

**D** found at the junction of two or more routes.

**16** The Pebmarsh area………………………

**A** probably had seven tyes.

**B** probably had six tyes.

**C** appears to have had five or six tyes.

**D** was not in East Anglia.

**17** The tyes in the Pebmarsh area were……………..…..

**A** near the river.

**B** used by medieval freemen.

**C** mostly at the margins of the parish.

**D** owned by Earls Colne Priory.

**18** According to the writer, wealthy landowners…………….….

**A** did not find the sight of forest land attractive.

**B** found the sight of forest land attractive.

**C** were attracted by the sight of forest land.

**D** considered forest land unproductive.

**Questions 19 - 28**

Complete the table below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 19-28 on your answer sheet.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1380s - | John Hayle who is documented apparently gave his name to Hayles Tye.  |
| 1500s - | The name of Hayles Tye was still **19**....................... and **20**.................... again in the following two centuries in relation to taxes. |
| 18th Century - | Hayles Tye was renamed **21**...................... ; the original dwellings may either have disappeared, or were **22**...................... .  |
| 1817 - | Charles Townsend of Ferriers Farm **23**....................... Files Green.  |
| 1821 - | At File’s Green, Charles Townsend built **24**...................... cottages, which housed families employed as **25**....................... .  The chimney structure and the **26**...................... appear to pre-date the cottages.  |
| 1933 - | The cottage now called File’s Green Cottage was bought by the local **27**....................... manager who converted the cottage into **28**....................... . |

**Reading Passage 3**

**A** According to the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, there has been a threefold increase in hearing loss and, in the future, deafness will become an epidemic.  It is hardly surprising that new research shows complaints about noise, in particular loud music and barking dogs, are on the increase. So dire has the situation become that the National Society for Clean Air and the Environment was even moved to designate 7 June 2000 as Noise Action Day.

**B** There are so many different sources of noise competing for people’s attention.  Travelling on a train as it saunters gently through the countryside was once a civilised and enjoyable experience. That delight has but disappeared.  Because we have to reach our destination more quickly, the train hurtles at break-neck speed along tracks not designed to carry carriages at such high velocity.  The train is noisier, and so are the occupants.  They have to compete with the din of the train and the conversations of their fellow travellers.  And then there are the ubiquitous headphones (one set if you are lucky); not to mention that bane of all travellers, the mobile phone -not one’s own, of course, because one has switched it off.  The noise sensitive, a growing minority group, are hit by a double whammy here: the phone going off and the person answering in a loud voice, because they cannot believe the other person can hear.  And let us not forget computer games making horrid noises given by parents to keep their children quiet!  It is, however, gratifying to see that some train companies request people to keep the volume of their headphones down.  It still strikes one as strange that people have to be reminded to do this.  Like no-smoking carriages they should have more no-noise carriages: mobile-free, headphone-free, computer-free zones!

**C** And the answer?  Should people simply stay at home?  No, not really.  The neighbours do DIY: if you are lucky between 9 am and 7pm, and if you are not, 24 hours a day.  They play loud music, sing, play the piano, rip up their carpets; they jump up and down on bare floorboards to annoy you further.  They have loud parties to irritate you and cats, dogs and children that jump onto bare wooden floors and make your heart stop.  And, because they want to hear the music in other parts of their flat they pump up the volume, so that you can feel the noise as well as hear it.  And if you are very fortunate, they attach the stereo to the walls above your settee, so that you can vibrate as well.  Even if you live in a semi-detached or detached property, they will still get you.

**D** People escape to the countryside and return to the urban environment.  They cannot tolerate the noise - the tractors, the cars and the motorbikes ripping the air apart as they career along country roads. Then there are the country dirt-track rallies that destroy the tranquillity of country weekends and holidays.  And we must not forget the birds!  Indeed, the dawn chorus is something to contend with.  So, when you go to the countryside, make sure you take your industrial ear-muffs with you!

**E** A quiet evening at the cinema, perhaps, or a restaurant?  The former will have the latest all-round stereophonic eardrum-bursting sound system, with which they will try to deafen you.  Film soundtracks register an average of 82 decibels with the climax of some films hitting as high as 120!  And in the restaurant, you will be waited on by waiters who have been taking their employers to court, because the noise in their working environment is way above the legal limits. Normal conversation registers at 60 decibels but noise levels of up to 90 are frequent in today’s restaurants.  The danger level is considered to be any noise above 85 decibels!  What is it doing to your eardrums then?  Shopping is also out, because stereophonic sound systems have landed there, too.

**F** Recently the law in the United Kingdom has been changed vis-à-vis noise, with stiffer penalties: fines, confiscation of stereo equipment and eviction for serious offences.  Noise curfews could also be imposed in residential areas by enforcing restrictions on noise levels after certain times in the evenings, tighter legislation is a step in the right direction but there is no one solution to the problem, least of all recourse to the law.  In some well-publicised cases, the legal and bureaucratic process has been unbearable enough to drive people to suicide.

**G** The situation needs to be addressed from a variety of different angles simultaneously.  There are practical solutions like using building materials in flats and houses that absorb sound: sound-proofing material is already being used in recording studios and, whilst it is far from cheap to install, with research and mass sales, prices will come down.  Designers have begun to realise that there is a place for soft furnishings in restaurants, like carpets, soft wall-coverings and cushions.  As well as creating a relaxing ambiance, they absorb the noise.

**H** Informal solutions like mediation are also frequently more effective than legislation. And the answer may partly be found in the wider social context. The issue is surely one of public awareness and of politeness, of respect for neighbours, of good manners, and also of citizenship; in effect, how individuals operate within a society and relate to each other.  Perhaps we need to be taught once again tolerate silence.

**Questions 29 - 35**

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 29-40** which are based on Reading Passage 3.

Reading Passage 3 has eight paragraphs **A-H**.

From the list of headings below choose the most suitable heading for each paragraph.

Write the appropriate numbers i-xiii in boxes 29-35 on your answer sheet.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **List of Headings** |
| **i** |   |  Social solutions |
| **ii** |   |  The law backs noise |
| **iii** |   |  Some practical solutions |
| **iv** |   |  The beautiful countryside |
| **v** |   |  Noise from mobiles |
| **vi** |   |  Neighbour noise |
| **vii** |   |  Noisy travellers |
| **viii** |   |  Noise to entertain you |
| **ix** |   |  Noisy restaurants |
| **x** |   |  The law and noise |
| **xi** |   |  Rural peace shattered |
| **xii** |   |  A quiet evening at the restaurant |
| **xiii** |   |  Noise on the increase |

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|                        Example | Answer |
|                        Paragraph **A**  | **xiii**  |

 |
| **29** | Paragraph **B** |
| **30** | Paragraph **C**  |
| **31** | Paragraph **D**  |
| **32** | Paragraph **E**  |
| **33** | Paragraph **F**  |
| **34** | Paragraph **G**  |
| **35** | Paragraph **H**  |

**Questions 36 - 39**

Look at the following areas where noise is a problem (Questions 36-39) and the list of solutions for noise problems below.

Match each area with the correct solution.

Write the correct letter **A-K** in boxes 36-39 on your answer sheet.

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| **36**  | Trains |
| **37** | Restaurants |
| **38** | Homes |
| **39** | Living in a rural setting |
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| --- |
| **List of Solutions** |
| **A** | People should be sent to prison. |
| **B** | More sophisticated sound systems are needed. |
| **C** | Soft furnishings are needed. |
| **D** | People should stay at home. |
| **E** | Sound-proofing materials should be used. |
| **F** | Music should be turned down. |
| **G** | The noise laws should be relaxed. |
| **H** | Shops should have restricted opening hours. |
| **I** | Trains should be sound-proofed. |
| **J** | More noise-free carriages should be introduced on trains. |
| **K** | Visitors should take industrial ear-muffs with them. |

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**Question 40**

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C,** **D or E.**

Write your answers in box 40 on your answer sheet.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **40** | Which of the following is the most suitable title for Reading Passage 3? |
|   |   |   |
|  | **A** | The legal impact of increased noise |
|  | **B** | Societal noise: problems and solutions |
|  | **C** | A call for increased noise tolerance within neighbourhoods |
|  | **D** | Deafness: a by-product of modern society |
|  | **E** | Neighbourhood sounds on the increase |